5: Cremona B-3, 4 (no date) 1923
EZ6 Malta EZ6

Bombazine (without lace) or silk faldettas are now the popular style. The vernacular *fulqina* and *ghonnella* for the *faldetta* point to its probable origin; the word *ghonnella* is derived from the Italian *gonnella*. The term *falda*, with its diminutive *faldetta* (skirt), suggests that this hood or wimple represents the tail of the skirt put over the head inside out in wet weather. Black stone trinkets are worn in place of those of gold. Women in both villages and towns who cannot afford to buy special trinkets cover their earrings with black stuff.

The old funeral rites, described by Abela and Ciantar from extracts from wills of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, are only faint survivals of the gorgeous pseudo-pagan rites which prevailed in all parts of continental Europe up to the period of the Reformation, and in Malta when under Italian influence. Up to 1872 the burial of the dead generally took place in churches or in churchyards (Maltese *cmutier*, from French *cimetière*). This still continues in country places, where people have family vaults. A law providing for extra-mural interment was proposed by De Rohan (A.D. 1775-1797), but it was only enforced by the Police Law of 1869, when a public cemetery was provided in 1871.

Since the adoption of the new burial law, funeral customs have assumed a very simple character. Old custom required that the dead body should be placed on a handbarrow or in a coffin with a cushion stuffed with laurel and orange leaves fixed under the head. The body was then conveyed to the church, with the relatives and friends following, and the wailing of the mourners accompanied by the sound of bagpipes, which in some villages are now replaced by violins and counterbases to which lamentations are sung. Since the opening of the Addolorata Cemetery the dead are generally transported in hearses. The tolling of funeral bells was once so important that in many wills careful provision was made for it, and it even rivalled the usual charitable bequests. This corresponds to Sicilian custom in the fifteenth century. After burial of the corpse, a black carpet or coverlet, or a velvet counterpane, was laid over the grave, and left there for some days. The offering of flowers to the dead is at present in great favour amongst the less educated, but some of the higher class object to it as a pro-fanation

7: Busuttil I, Y-4, 5 (no date) 1894
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In the afternoon of the Feast, the great harbour and the several creeks, especially that of Calcara, present indeed a very lively appearance. Yachts, boats, and small crafts plough the deep, the greater part sailing, with flags and streamers flying in the breeze, laden with people, mostly clad in gay summer costumes, which they put on for the first time on this day as a sign of the approaching hot season.

Some of these gay parties keep on their crafts, singing and playing guitars and melodeons, whilst others disembark on some shady rock on the sea-shore, where they spread their table-cloths and sit down to enjoy the edibles which they bring with them.

A little after sunset, when the numerous and jolly picnic parties have emptied some bottles of wine, the boats

7: Busuttil I, Y-4, 5 (no date) 1894
EZ6 Malta EZ6

796 in companies to some one of their
574 friends, at whose house they amuse them-
262 selves eating honey cakes and pancakes or fritters, and playing for nuts till the church bells ring a little before or after midnight.

At the conclusion of the service they come out again and devote the remainder of the night to amusements.

796 The approaching festival of Christmas
534 is heralded in some of the villages of
[184] Malta by the appearance of the "zakk" and "tambur" players in the streets. (*)

[237] The *zakk* or bagpipe is a wind instrument—one of the primitive instruments of sylvan music—formed of an inflated dog skin, which is held by the player under his left arm, with the legs

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[541] (*) The *Zakk* and tambourine are also in use amongst our lower classes on the days of Carnival.

7: Busuttil I, Y-4, 5 (no date) 1894
EZ6 Malta EZ6

directed upwards, and having a mouth piece by which the skin is filled, and a cane flute or pipe which is played with both hands. This the country people play at this time of the year to represent the shepherds of Bethlehem. 796 534 [237]

The decking out of the *presepiu*, a crib or representation of the Nativity of the Holy Child at Bethlehem, by a group of dolls with pasteboard scenery, furnishes amusement to the Maltese, both old and young. 796 778

Several of the houses have a crib more or less artistically arranged, and the better the arrangements of the crib, the greater is the concourse of people who come to see it.

The custom of decking our churches and habitations with evergreens at Christmas has existed from the very establishment of Christianity and was 796 174 824